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Comp. 1

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Monster

What would you do if your entire life could be changed with one decision that is now out of your control? In Monster, by Walter Dean Myers, Steve Harmon learns what it is like to be in this situation. Steve was allegedly involved in a store robbery; in which, the owner of the store was killed. The novel depicts the process of Steve’s court hearing, and allows the reader to see how Steve changes over the trial. Prior to the trial, Steve believed he was innocent, but as the trial goes on Steve doesn’t only lose faith in himself being innocent, but also he begins to lose who he is as a person.

In the beginning, Steve knew he was innocent and wouldn’t listen to anyone who said differently. In between trial hearings, Steve would be held in a prison where he would socialize with the other prisoners. While in prison an older prisoners asked,” You innocent?” to which Steve replied “Yes”(77). This simplistic answer indicates the confidence behind Steve’s answer. He did not hesitate when directly questioned about his innocence. Although, Steve is confident now he soon begins to lose it as the trial continues.

As the trial continues, Steve starts wondering more and more if he is truly innocent or not. Throughout the book, Steve keeps a journal of his thoughts which allow for the readers to get in his head. In one of these passages from July 11, Steve writes, “And I knew she felt that I didn’t do anything wrong. It was me who wasn’t sure. It was me who lay on the cot wondering if I was fooling myself”(148). Even with his mother believing in him, Steve begins to wonder if he is tricking himself. This lack of confidence in him, indicates to a reader how the conditions of prison may affect a person’s mind. His loss of belief of innocence is gone, but Steve still has more that he can lose.

By the end of the trial Steve is found innocent of the charges, but the damages of the trail have already caused Steve to lose himself. Steve begins to make movies of himself after the trail. Steve writes, “That is why I take films of myself. I want to know who I am. I want to know the road to panic that I took. I want to look at myself a thousand times to look for one true image “(281), describing his purpose behind taking the videos. This passage shows that Steve has fully lost the sense of who he is. This trial clearly changed Steve Harmon’s life as he knew it.

Although Steve was found innocent the trial forever changed his life. Steve no longer knew who he was due to the trial.

Reflection:

I was able to compose this piece by using the criticism of my interview writing. First, I made sure to incorporate a thesis into this paper. The thesis helps to give the overall idea of the paper and tells the reader what is coming in the paragraphs to come. Furthermore, I made sure to use the 3 in’s when using quotes from the book to allow for easier comprehension for the readers. Finally, I made sure to keep the entire paper focused on the book Monster, and how Steve changed throughout the trial process.